

# Domestic Geographic Name Report

1 Use this form to recommend a feature name or to suggest a name change.

2. For features on Federal lands, coordinate requests with the agency (U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, etc.) For the administrative area in which the land is located.

3. On the reverse side of this form give information on the local usage and authority for recommended name.

4. For more information about the Geographic Names Information System or the National Gazetteer Program, contact the U.S. Board on Geographic Names at 703-648-4544..

5. Return this form to:

Executive Secretary for Domestic  
Geographic Names  
U.S. Geological Survey  
523 National Center  
Reston, VA 22092

## Action Requested

Proposed New Name: X

Application Change:       

Name Change:       

Other:       

**Recommended Name:** Kingsbury Creek

**State:** Alaska

**County or Equivalent:** Ketchikan Gateway Borough

**Administrative Area:** Tongass National Forest/Misty Fjords National Monument

## Specific Area Covered:

Latitude: 56.131154 N Longitude: -130.967503 W (Mouth, WGS 84)

Latitude: 56.081495 N Longitude: -130.905053 W (Head, WGS 84)

Meridian Copper: Township 66S, Range 93E, Sections 24 and 25, Range 94E, Sections 19, 20, 29, 32, and 33; Township 67S, Range 94E, Sections 04, 05, and 08 Elevation Sea Level ft (Mouth), 2500 ft (Head)

**Type of Feature** (stream, mountain, populated place, etc.): Stream

**Is the feature identified (including other names), in the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS)?**

Yes    No X            If **Yes**, how is it listed?

**Description of feature (physical shape, length, width, direction of flow, etc.):**

The headwaters of the stream sit at approximately 2500 ft on a northeast-facing slope and flows approximately 4500 ft to the Northeast before turning NNE, flowing in that direction for approximately 2.6 miles before turning W and flowing for 2.5 miles before curving N near the mouth and flowing into Lake Creek, approximately 70 miles N and E of Ketchikan. The feature is located within Misty Fjords National Monument, a designated wilderness.

**Maps and other sources using recommended name (including scale and date)**

*Untitled*, Ketchikan Alaska Chronicle, Feb. 9, 1926

*Captain Kingsbury's Cabin*, Stephens, J., Ketchikan Daily News, Jan. 23, 1975.

*Revised Anadromous Stream Catalog of Southeastern Alaska, Appendix A – District I, Vol. II, Eastern Behm Canal Area Survey Data, ADF&G Technical Report No. 30.* Edgington, J., and R. Larson, 1977.

*Escapements of Chinook Salmon in Southeast Alaska and Transboundary Rivers in 2008, Fishery Data Series No. 10-71.* Pahlke, Keith A., Nov. 2010, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Page 50.

### **Other Name (Variants)**

"Clear Creek," used in Alaska Department of Fish and Game Publications

"Shàanak'w Héenak'u," a name mentioned by Ketchikan Indian Community, Organized Village of Saxman, Sealaska Heritage Institute, and Sealaska Corporation as a forthcoming name proposal in their joint statement opposing this proposal (see "local opposition" section below)

### **Maps and other sources using other name or application (including scale and date)**

*Revised Anadromous Stream Catalog of Southeastern Alaska, Appendix A – District I, Vol. II, Eastern Behm Canal Area Survey Data, ADF&G Technical Report No. 30.* Edgington, J., and R. Larson, 1977.

*Escapements of Chinook Salmon in Southeast Alaska and Transboundary Rivers in 2008, Fishery Data Series No. 10-71.* Pahlke, Keith A., Nov. 2010, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Page 50.

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### **Name information such as origin, meaning of the recommended name, historical significance, biographic data (if commemorative), nature of usage or application, or any other pertinent information:**

Captain Henry Kingsbury first arrived in Alaska in 1911. He was a skipper of an Alaska Packers' Star ship that sailed between Loring and the West Coast of the United States. Circa 1924, he homesteaded and built a cabin where a clear water creek flows into Lake Creek before entering the Unuk River. According to Ketchikan Gateway Borough, common usage of the name in honor of Kingsbury dates back almost 100 years.

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**Is the recommended name in local usage?** Yes  X  No \_\_\_\_ If Yes, approximately how many years? Over 100

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### **Is there local opposition to, or conflict with the recommended name (as located)?**

Ketchikan Indian Community, Organized Village of Saxman, Sealaska Heritage Institute, and Sealaska Corporation released a joint statement 03/12/2021 opposing the proposal:

"The Organized Village of Saxman, Ketchikan Indian Community, Sealaska Corporation, and Sealaska Heritage Institute object to the proposed name for the following reasons:

1. It assigns an English name to an unnamed feature located in the aboriginal homeland of the Tlingit people. Indigenous people have occupied these lands for more than 10,000 years, and it is against our policy to give an English name to an unnamed landscape feature in Southeast Alaska, which holds over 4,000 Tlingit place names. Since the time of the first European explorers, newcomers have asserted that the land was *terra nullius* (nobody's land), and therefore the assignment of European names was legitimate and lasting. We do not recognize any right for non-Tlingit to put names on unnamed features in the landscape of Southeast Alaska because it is the prerogative of Tlingit clans to bestow names of places within the aboriginal homeland of the Tlingit people.
2. The proposed name is that of an individual who does not warrant consideration for such an honor. He ran a salmon tender for the Alaska Packers, which was notorious for the use of perpetually-fishing salmon traps placed in the paths of salmon runs, and was responsible for the decimation of salmon resources in Southeast Alaska, which has not recovered to this day. In effect, he was stealing the salmon resources that belonged to the Tlingit clans in the area and provided no compensation to them for the taking of these fish.
3. Furthermore, the character of this man as a squatter on Tlingit land who survived half drunk on wine made from raisins is an extremely poor example of someone who might be considered worthy of a commemorative name. According to the guidelines of the Alaska Historical Commission, the proposal must demonstrate that this individual "made a significant, acknowledged contribution over time to the community or state" which is laughable in this case, based on the information provided in the proposal which describes a hermit living by himself on this creek, barely surviving on raisin wine during the

winter months, and who on occasion used a rifle to drive off intruders. There is no mention of any kind of contribution he might have made to the community.

4. The letter of endorsement from the Ketchikan Gateway Borough is likewise devoid of any such information about the value of this individual beyond the fact that he was one of the "early pioneers" in the area. We do not see the contributions this person may have made as he departed into the woods to live a solitary existence after serving a short time (less than one season) as the captain of a fish tender. Glorifying the individual as an "early pioneer" is not worthy of consideration for commemoration in an official place name.

5. There is no evidence to support the claim that this name has been in use for 100 years beyond unsupported statements that "most old-timers" still refer to the creek as Kingsbury Creek. There are no names provided nor any indication of how many such persons exist. ADF&G records indicate that it held an informal name of "Clear Creek" for many years.

6. There has been no attempt by the proposer of this name to contact the Tlingit people with knowledge of and interests in the area to discuss the proposal. This is an egregious omission of a proper mode of conduct.

We would like to mention that we plan to propose a Tlingit name for this creek in the near future as an alternative to the proposal. This name is Shàanak'w Héenak'u, which is translated as "Little Woman Creek." This name was given to us by our clan leaders from this area."

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**For proposed new name, please provide evidence that feature is unnamed:**

N/A

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**Additional Information:**

Requests for comments sent to:

Ketchikan Gateway Borough – KGB sent in a letter of support dated 08/03/2020, which was included in the original proposal but has not responded to the OHA request for comments.

USDA, U. S. Forest Service – replied 03/12/2021 – "The U.S. Forest Service received your request for comment on a new geographic name proposal within the Tongass National Forest. This proposal submits the commemorative name Kingsbury Creek for an unnamed tributary stream of the Unuk River located about 70 miles northeast of Ketchikan, Alaska. The U.S. Forest Service confirms that this stream has no official name and notes that it lies within Misty Fjords National Monument and Wilderness. The proposer submitted a carefully prepared proposal and takes evident interest in the character, Captain Kingsbury, providing several examples of the name Kingsbury Creek in use. They also indicate that the name Kingsbury Creek is still in use by "most old-timers." However, this stream lies within federally designated wilderness. Per U.S. Board on Geographic Names (BGN) Domestic Names Policy, new wilderness names are not approved unless an overriding need for the name is demonstrated. The Kingsbury Creek proposal does not provide a specific reason for overriding the BGN wilderness names policy. In alignment with BGN policy, the U.S. Forest Service does not support this proposal, to name this stream Kingsbury Creek.

BGN Domestic Names Wilderness Policy:

***Policy IV. Wilderness Area Geographic Names***

*Sec. 1 The BGN will not approve proposed names for unnamed features within wilderness areas, including unpublished names in local use, unless an overriding need can be demonstrated by the proponent.*

Additionally, while the use of a name prior to wilderness designation can support a proposal in wilderness, no evidence shows that there was common and consistent usage of the name Kingsbury Creek. This name does not appear on older authoritative publications such as USGS topographic or Forest Service maps. Furthermore, the proposal lists an alternate unofficial stream name in use, Clear Creek. An unofficial name used extensively by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Lastly, "present-day local usage or preferences" are a cornerstone of BGN domestic name principles. A proposal should demonstrate broad community interest and support, including that of the Native community. This proposal presents limited evidence of local support, and the U.S. Forest Service understands that the Organized Village of Saxman, Ketchikan Indian Community, Sealaska, and Sealaska Heritage Institute oppose this proposal."

Ketchikan Indian Community, Organized Village of Saxman, Sealaska Heritage Institute, and Sealaska Corporation replied in a joint statement 03/12/2021: See "local opposition" section above.

Organized Village of Kasaan

Metlakatla Indian Community

Wrangell Cooperative Association

Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska

Cape Fox Corporation

Mountaineering Club of Alaska – Steven Gruhn responded to the request for comments on behalf of MCA on 03.10.2021:  
"The MCA does not object to the proposed name".

Ketchikan Daily News

Copy submitted by: Name (first, M.I., last)	Title	Phone (day)	Date
<b>John A. Harrington</b>			
Company or Agency	Address (city, State, and Zip)		
	<b>261 Potter Road North, Ketchikan, AK 99901</b>		
Copy Prepared by (if other than above)	Title	Phone (day)	Date
<b>Judith E. Bittner</b>	<b>SHPO</b>	<b>(907) 269-8700</b>	
Company or Agency	Address (city, State, and Zip)		
Alaska Department of Natural Resources/Office of History and Archaeology	<b>550 West 7<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 1310, Anchorage, AK 99501-3565</b>		
Authority for Recommended Name:	Mailing Address and Telephone	Occupation	Years in Area





